

Public Hearing Comment Received by the Department of Workforce Development, Child Care Section

Name	Comment
Mary Corkin	<p>Family Child Care: Provider/Teacher Qualifications</p> <p>An Unrelated Bachelors Degree (11 points) should <u>NOT</u> receive a higher number of points as compared to a related Associate Degree (5 points) or an Associate Degree and an Infant Toddler Credential (9 points).</p>
Laurice Lincoln Early Childhood Education Labs, Inc.	<p>Tiered Reimbursement:</p> <p>Agrees that tiered reimbursement can create a powerful incentive for child care providers to improve quality.</p> <p>Believes that the 5 percent decrease for level 2 should instead be –10 percent at a minimum. A 10 to 15 percent decrease in funding will make a program decide if they want to stay in business. If they are committed to the service they provide they will find a way to improve.</p> <p>“Have a strong hand and backbone when it comes to our children and stop finding ways to push those people you feel may find the new requirements ‘hard work’ in the child care field. Please stay the course and put our children first!”</p>
Roni Giese Westbrook Christian Chapel Day Care	<p>Public Hearing:</p> <p>Disappointed that the public hearing was held in conjunction with the WECA conference. “This would cause the population to be well stacked to speak FOR the recommendation.” “A difficult arena for a dissenting voice because of the strongly biased majority at the conference.”</p> <p>Enforcement Actions:</p> <p>Perhaps it is not evident to those who serve on the Task Force how easy it is to receive an enforcement action. I would hesitate to reduce an otherwise quality center to Tier One because of a single incident; yet that is where one would find herself after receiving an enforcement action.</p> <p>If there are centers out there that should be closed down...”close them down!”</p> <p>Teacher Qualifications:</p> <p>It might be easier to count classrooms, but does counting classrooms serve to define the quality desired? Information does not specify whether these are classrooms which require one or two child care workers by licensing ratios.</p> <p>Materials indicate that a bachelor’s degree not related to early childhood should be labeled “unrelated”. I have a bachelor's degree in business administration and operate a child care center as a business. I find it to be an extremely positive blend of training/experience. Why would my training and experience be seen as unrelated?</p> <p>Environment/Curriculum:</p> <p>Accreditation is awarded 10 points, but a center that meets all other quality rating indicators except that of accreditation can only earn up to 9 points. Is it accreditation that is desired or a quality child care center?</p> <p>Licensors:</p> <p>The responsibilities of licensors are continually increasing as the number of licensors continues to diminish.</p> <p>Quality Rating criteria must be objective and must eliminate any subjective criteria.</p>
Carmen Rivers Wisconsin Child Care Improvement Project	<p>Tiered Reimbursement:</p> <p>Overall, the Task Force has created a workable plan.</p> <p>Does not believe that a 5 percent decrease payment between level 2 and level 3 is enough. A provider or center that is just meeting the licensing rules is providing only ‘average’ care, yet they will qualify to receive an above average rate.</p> <p>Would like to see level 2 receive payment at the 50th percentile and would like to see level 1 receive payment at the 25th percentile. “Below average pay for below average care.”</p>

Deb Lynch Kids's Stuff Childcare	<p>Group Child Care Center: Teacher Qualifications</p> <p>Strong supporter of continuing education within her center. Previously there had not been incentive to teachers to take credit based instruction vs. hours based instruction. Will there be an option to substitute coursework hours completed through connection to a technical college or university for credit based coursework completed?</p> <p>Support Systems:</p> <p>Will the Registry reflect differently, or will the current levels be used for determining status?</p> <p>Regulatory Compliance:</p> <p>For regulatory compliance for centers – does this mean if you have any write ups or just if your license has been denied or revoked?</p>
Red Granite 3 Group Centers Multiple Family Day Care Providers	<p>Generally support the Tiered Reimbursement Proposal</p> <p>Quality Rating System: Teacher Qualifications</p> <p>After a child care program supports a teacher to achieve a four year degree, how can they afford to have wages and benefits that will keep this educated teacher in their program and no move into a public school setting?</p> <p>Support Systems:</p> <p>Will there be funding available (grants) to help support the cost of maintaining a quality program?</p>
Rae Williams- DiMilo Wisconsin Afterschool Association (Formerly the Wisconsin School-Age Care Alliance)	<p>The Wisconsin Afterschool Association would like to acknowledge and support the work of the Quality Counts for Kids Task Force.</p> <p>Quality Indicators Rating Scale: Environment</p> <p>Include the National Afterschool Association Accreditation Standards and continue to recognize and support the development of the Wisconsin School-Age Credential.</p> <p>Tiered Reimbursement:</p> <p>The school-age care community would like to be included in the quality improvement incentives and child care reimbursement programs that are developed for the quality indicator rating scale and tiered reimbursement programs.</p>
Therese Ciofani The Nurturing Nook	<p>Indicating support for Governor Doyle's "<i>KidsFirst</i>" Initiative. I feel that this initiative will help to support the providers that are high quality and help to eliminate those that are there just to collect the pay check at the end of the week.</p> <p>Support Services:</p> <p>Need to have a back up plan for all centers who may be hit with either staff leaving because of low ratings, or staff expecting higher wages because they are of high quality.</p> <p>Putting children first and offering high quality child care is in our job description and not something staff should be compensated for above and beyond their standards paycheck.</p> <p>Rating Scale:</p> <p>I support more evaluations of child care providers, and am constantly looking for ways to improve my program and staff.</p>
Melissa Kuerschner	<p>Quality Indicator Rating Scale: Teacher Qualifications</p> <p>We need to require more education, which includes observation or student teaching of some kind from the staff in this field.</p> <p>We need to expect more of our staff.</p> <p>We need to work together to form higher standards of educational requirements for our staff.</p> <p>Public Awareness Campaign:</p> <p>The more we educate the general public about the necessity of quality child care programs, the more people will become interested in being a part of them.</p>
Marcia Birschbach Mary Linsmeier Schools	<p>Supportive Services:</p> <p>In order for programs to score high on the Quality Counts ratings, we will need to be reassured that adequate funds will remain in the T.E.A.C.H. scholarship program and R.E.W.A.R.D. stipend program. With these resources available, child care programs can increase quality levels because of increased education and pay compensation.</p> <p>Child care is an 'under-resourced' system.</p>

Shelly Kroeger	<p>The Child Care Rating Scale promotes top performance in our child care centers and helps to eliminate centers that provide marginal care.</p> <p>Regulatory Compliance: This is a great concept, but it brings about many questions on how the system will be monitored and what qualities should be included.</p> <p>Quality Rating Scale: Teacher Education Sometimes what we would like to see happen and what can reasonably take place are two different things. Requiring credits in early childhood and/or utilizing credential programs that already exist seem to be the reasonable avenues to take.</p> <p>Environment: If all programs need to follow an environmental rating scale to increase their ratings, all programs will inevitably be very similar and we will lose many unique programs and take choices away from the families.</p> <p>A comprehensive quality indicator rating model (including licensing, teacher qualifications, the learning environment, policies and practices) allows centers the opportunity to pursue their unique program and parents the right to make the choice of what type of program is right for them.</p>
Carmen Adams Tender Loving Care	<p>Quality Rating Scale: Teacher Qualifications It is very difficult to find child care teachers in Oshkosh with CDA's and above when we hire new staff.</p> <p>A bachelor's degree in Elementary Education with additional graduate credits in early childhood should be considered a related degree.</p> <p>Environment: The proposed changes to NAEYC Accreditation will make it difficult to continue as an accredited program. The new fee structure is much higher.</p> <p>I do not mind having my center rated. I believe we would score high.</p> <p>Tiered Reimbursement: How exactly will my 5 star center come out ahead with the higher reimbursement rate? I need this explained in much more detail. What impact will there be on the family co-payment?</p> <p>To make this payment a real incentive, it will need to be above and beyond what Wisconsin Shares would normally pay, and should be considered as extra profit, NOT as part of the parent co-payment or other program costs.</p>
Wanda Newton	<p><i>KidsFirst</i> is a marvelous plan which I fully endorse. Quality ratings for child care and early childhood education programs should be based on the basic premise that the program meets the needs of the child, and in some aspects the parents as well. The child care program must provide a clean, wholesome, loving, nurturing, supportive environment for the children. It must be more than a baby sitting facility.</p> <p>Quality Rating Scale: Teacher Qualifications True quality and success is derived from the educational level of everyone involved in the child care facility, from director down.</p> <p>Regulatory Compliance: A system for reward for consistently meeting the licensing standards would serve as an incentive.</p> <p>Environment: Environmental rating scales should be implemented for all day care programs, with mandatory participation and as a consideration for continuing licensing.</p> <p>Implementation: Funding must be a long term commitment to meet these goals, and without compromise. This means hiring qualified, fair, educated, non-bias investigators and administrators. These individuals should be comprised of qualified child care directors and administrators representing all ethic, cultural, and social economic backgrounds.</p>

Sister Betty Steiner Guardian Angle Learning Center	Foster Children: Remember that Foster Children are an important part of the Governor's <i>KidsFirst</i> Initiative. I encourage you to give thoughtful consideration to the reforms made available for action. Hopefully, the funding will be approved by the legislature for this all important endeavor of making children the number one priority.
Sr. Marie Louise Balistrieri Guardian Angel Learning Center	Child Care Subsidy Program: Wisconsin Shares In Milwaukee, each child care program is given a Liaison to have as a contact person, but it can be difficult to connect with this person. Phone calls are not always answered, or return phone calls made. The 'Child Welfare Services' need to improve. Communication between parents and caseworkers is not always happening timely.
Marjorie Hilgart and Lisa Peternel YWCA of Rock County	Quality Rating System: Teacher Qualifications We constantly struggle to find staff who are qualified at a minimal level; the Task Force's recommendations would exacerbate staffing recruitment issues. Credit based coursework has recently been eliminated from Blackhawk Technical College, making it impossible to earn credits locally. Supply and demand in Rock County does not support child care staff members with Bachelor's degrees. Staff experience and longevity are critical factors in providing quality care for children; the rating system does not reflect this philosophy. Environment: YWCA's child care programs are administered as a set-up/tear down program due to the needs of shared space in a school setting. Implementing 5 learning centers would be a huge challenge. The quality indicators proposed may not always be best practice for a school-age site. Implementation: Tiered reimbursement is at odds with the philosophical foundations of the YWCA due to the inherent inequities of such a system. The reimbursement plan creates a situation where providers may be forced to pass on additional child care costs to the families that can least afford them. Proposal: The YWCA of Rock applauds the efforts of the Task Force and unequivocally supports efforts to improve the quality of child care programs.
Catherine Grys Mid-State Technical College Student	<i>KidsFirst</i> : Quality Counts for Kids Recommendation: I think this is a pretty good idea. Centers need to go above and beyond the minimum. Teacher/Director Qualifications: Teacher's education can help them understand children better. A great director supports the staff and encourages them to do their best. Environment: An environment that encourages learning is the greatest place for a child. Tiered Reimbursement: The percentage reimbursement is a wonderful idea.
Angela Wiedeman Mid-State Technical College Student	<i>KidsFirst</i> : Quality Counts for Kids Recommendation: I am giving support for this initiative both as a parent and as a student in the MSTC Early Childhood Program. This rating scale is a great thing for children in Wisconsin. This rating scale will make it easier to know and understand the quality of care that a certain caregiver offers as a child care worker. This scale will act as an incentive for child care workers to further their education and standards, to rate at a higher level. Anything pertaining to children is worth fighting for.
Chelsey Kincaid Mid-State Technical College Student	<i>KidsFirst</i> : Quality Counts for Kids Recommendation: I think that the reimbursement being tied to the star quality rating system is an excellent idea and a way to encourage programs to increase the quality of their care. Tiered Reimbursement: Support for tiers. It is unfair to good quality centers to get the same reimbursement as low quality child care centers. This higher payment will be an incentive for improved quality.

<p>Shannon Steinbach Mid-State Technical College Student</p>	<p><i>KidsFirst: Quality Counts for Kids Recommendation:</i> This seems to have the potential to be a great program. Parents will have a more reliable and accurate source of information. Categories of qualifications for points are very objective. This initiative will encourage centers to improve their scores.</p> <p><i>Quality of Teaching:</i> The qualifications say nothing about the quality of teaching. The amount of education someone does not necessarily make them a quality teacher. If the standards become too high, it could discourage good, quality teachers and centers.</p> <p><i>Unanswered Questions:</i> How often with the ratings be published? How often will the centers be rated? How can the state afford all of the staff it will need to do the rating with all the budget cuts? How will teachers afford to go to school when their pay is so low? Are teachers going to get more money to go back to school? How will the families of the teachers handle not having a member around because they are either at work or at school? Do associate degrees become obsolete in a center's quest to have the 'best' teachers, the ones with a bachelor's degree? What do those teachers with lesser degrees do when they can't get jobs?</p>
<p>Pat Dischler Family Child Care Provider Patty Cake Preschool</p>	<p><i>KidsFirst: Quality Counts for Kids Recommendation:</i> I am disheartened by the lack of understanding of the business of family child care. While improving child care quality is a worthy goal, it is impossible to do so without addressing the low income problem in this field. They are very much connected. Providers need a decent wage and unfortunately having a degree, or even a national accreditation does not always translate into a higher income. Does it make sense as a business to have expenses that do not add to its financial stability and success? We can not ignore the fact that this is a business and solid fiscal choices are essential to its survival. I feel the Quality Counts Initiative ignores this fact.</p> <p><i>Tiered Reimbursement:</i> Tying the rating system to the states reimbursement rate scale for Wisconsin Shares will have little impact on quality improvement, if not a negative one. Research shows that parents tend to go to providers that reflect their own level of lifestyle, meaning that most Wisconsin Shares families are taking their children to low income providers. These providers do not have the financial means to gain higher education. Even if they receive the highest reimbursement rates from the families, typically their own family is struggling and can not afford higher education.</p> <p><i>Quality Indicator Rating Scale:</i> The rating scale makes it impossible to receive a 4 or 5 star rating without a degree in early childhood or national accreditation.</p> <p><i>Family Child Care Provider Qualifications:</i> Teacher qualifications do not recognize years of experience. Excludes providers who provide high quality care that do not have degrees but have hours of training from conferences and workshops. A high quality provider will have patience, creativity and a love for children-none of which can be learned in a classroom. The state will have virtually zero 4 or 5 star providers. Limiting the points to only those with an early childhood degree ignores the basic characteristics of a family child care provider. In Dane County only 19 percent of licensed provider had a bachelor's degree, and 13 percent hold an associate degree. Providers who do obtain an Early Childhood Degree then leave this business for a more profitable career in the early childhood field.</p> <p><i>Implementation:</i> The Registry system is a closer representation of a provider's level of quality than the system developed by the Task Force. It recognizes years of experience, professional involvement and other indicators that the star system does not. Dollars would be better spent on providing grants to child care workers to help them pay for better education and accreditation fees.</p>

Edna Y. Velazquez Figueroa Mid-State Technical College Student	<p><i>KidsFirst: Quality Counts for Kids Recommendation:</i> This work is very important and necessary. This encourages parents to seek the best options for their children, and to be confident that their money is spent in a good, healthy and satisfactory way.</p> <p>Quality Indicator Rating Scale: The scale is complete, with different options to improve and encourages providers to maintain good quality centers. It is good to see incentives given to child care centers that provide quality programming to children. It would be good to see this type of programming available in all of our communities.</p>
Amy Stimac Consumer	<p><i>KidsFirst: Quality Counts for Kids Recommendation:</i> I am writing to congratulate the task force on coming up with a rating system for child care. I hope that it is implemented. This system will motivate child care centers to constantly improve.</p> <p>Unanswered Questions: How will there be time to inspect everyone and repeat inspections frequently? How will the people that do the ratings be selected? Will the public be able to access the ratings easily and will providers be able to advertise their ratings? Will there be other rewards for quality child care centers in addition to the Wisconsin Shares subsidy reimbursement?</p>
Lindsey Brabender Mid-State Technical College	<p><i>KidsFirst: Quality Counts for Kids Recommendation:</i> I think that a star rating on child care settings is a great idea. A parent will know right away what kind of center they are putting their child into with out having to move their child from one center to another. I think a parent should visit the center and ask questions even before they put their child in a program.</p>
Nicole Ebbe Mid-State Technical College Student	<p><i>KidsFirst: Quality Counts for Kids Recommendation:</i> I believe that the <i>KidsFirst</i> Program is wonderful. When we send our children off to day care we should be confident that they are receiving quality care. Having a rating system using stars will let parents know what kind of care their children will be getting. This program will give programs incentive to do better so that they are on the higher end of the rating scale. If we do have lower quality centers, maybe we should look at giving them more money so that they can improve their programs and provide better quality.</p>
Rachel Leverance Mid-State Technical College Student	<p><i>KidsFirst: Quality Counts for Kids Recommendation:</i> I think this is a good program. I think that it is good that a center is evaluated on the teaching experience and degree the teacher has.</p> <p>Teacher Qualifications: I think it is also important to see how well a teacher is with the children. Qualifications are important but interaction between the teacher and the students is just as important.</p> <p>Tiered Reimbursement: I think it is fair that centers should be given a set reimbursement rate to be paid. If the center has well trained teachers and a curriculum that is structures, they deserve the 25 percent increased reimbursement. But if center teachers are under-trained and the curriculum is not structured, the program itself is responsible for the decrease in reimbursement.</p>
Fawn Alexander Student	<p><i>KidsFirst: Quality Counts for Kids Recommendation:</i> I agree that we need to improve the quality of care in the child care system. Facilities should be classified by star system based on the more stars that you have equals the better quality that is assessed.</p> <p>Tiered Reimbursement: This reimbursement will promote the best educational experiences for children.</p> <p>Parent Information: The star system is not hard to comprehend.</p>

<p>George Hagenauer Madison 4-C</p>	<p><i>KidsFirst: Quality Counts for Kids Recommendation:</i> I support the concept of a state rating system for early childhood education programs and tying it to a tiered reimbursement system. Giving parents more information about program quality works. Previous experiences in Dane County indicate that parents that received violation information reported that they did not contact programs with founded complaints. Parents at all income levels were able to understand quality information made available to them. Providing information to parents on program violations ultimately led to two low quality centers closing.</p> <p>Teacher Qualifications: How will credit based coursework from other countries be accepted by The Registry? Staff retention should be recognized as it reduces the cost of running this program.</p> <p>Tiered Reimbursement: Dane County studies indicate that introducing a tiered reimbursement system is an important improvement to the Wisconsin Shares subsidy program, as the state is often not receiving the quality of care it is paying for. Is the new tiered reimbursement system replacing the current system, or is it layered over the top of the current system? I prefer a structure that rewards improvements.</p> <p>Implementation: Regulatory Compliance There needs to be a way to differentiate between programs that are in compliance and those that are not. Develop a numerical means of evaluating non-compliance. There is a wide variation in the number of violations found at different programs. Develop an annual total of violations for each program. Averages could be run and programs identified with an abnormal number of violations. The system would be a lot stronger if programs regularly running several times above the normal number of violations were paid less under the tiered reimbursement system. Models should be run to identify how fines and orders relate to the number of violations at each program.</p> <p>National Accreditation: National accreditation bodies only monitor every 3 years. State licensing should develop a relationship with NAEYC to provide additional monitoring. This would strengthen the Standards and insure that the higher rate was going to programs that were really providing better services. Models should be run as to how this system would work. How will this work in market areas that do not currently support accredited programs because of low rates?</p> <p>Implementation: Will parents not on Wisconsin Shares have access to higher quality care and education for their young children? If this program is successful, some programs will close. Market data needs to be available by county/region to determine if replacement programs are needed. Facility loan applications and training for new center owners is needed to create a high quality program.</p>
<p>Joyce Lochner Preschool Program Teacher and Student</p>	<p><i>KidsFirst: Quality Counts for Kids Recommendation:</i> I feel this initiative is a well thought out system.</p> <p>Tiered Reimbursement: This is an excellent way to prioritize what needs to be subsidized while still putting the focus on quality child care. The point system creates a system where individual programs will want to strive for higher personal standards as well as maintain an above average learning environment. This system allows programs a proper reimbursement from Wisconsin Shares and creates an incentive for greater achievement to maintain a higher standard.</p> <p>Parent Information: This proposed system will provide an assessment to the public to assist them in making an informed decision when choosing a child care provider.</p>
<p>Tiffany Smith Mid-State Technical College Student</p>	<p><i>KidsFirst: Quality Counts for Kids Recommendation:</i> Tiered Reimbursement being tied to the star quality system is a good idea. This helps encourage child care programs to want to be their best. It is fair that higher quality child care programs receive higher reimbursement.</p>

Caroline Casper St. Philip's Preschool	<p><i>KidsFirst</i>: Quality Counts for Kids Recommendation: Include Preschools in the Quality Rating System</p> <p>Supportive Services: Training and Technical Assistance support is needed for those programs who will need resources and supplies to become better centers.</p> <p>4-Year Old Kindergarten: 4K programs should be licensed by DHFS and follow those rules and regulations. Give parents a choice of where they want their children to go – to 4K or private preschool. Would like to see government officials visit centers throughout the state to find out what goes on in child care. Please come visit our site sometime.</p>
Bobbi Florence Licensed and Certified Family Child Care	<p><i>KidsFirst</i>: Quality Counts for Kids Recommendation: I feel that this program, for the most part, is good, and is fair in the way the stars are determined.</p> <p>Tiered Reimbursement: Increased reimbursement should be received by the child care program to support high quality, and should not be used to reduce the amount of parent co-payment.</p> <p>Parent Information: Money should be allocated to educate parents on what to look for in quality child care, including the importance of understanding what regulated child care is! Illegal child care takes business away from high quality regulated programs. Concerned that parents will think that a 4 or 5 star rated program will be too expensive, and will not consider checking the program out.</p> <p>Teacher Qualifications: Many providers will not be able to reach 5 stars because they do not have a Bachelors degree. Most providers do have many hours of continuing education. While this education is not credit based, it is still education. The teacher qualifications should include points awarded for a program that has longevity and many hours of continuing education. An example of how this could be implemented: 1 point awarded for five years of experience and 75 hours of continuing education. How is licensed family child care separated from certified child care in this system?</p>
Gail Wanek Marinette County Certifier	<p><i>KidsFirst</i>: Quality Counts for Kids Recommendation: I have reservations about placing certified providers on the star system. It is hard to recruit and retain certified providers in our rural county. A provider without a star may still provide good care. Most certified care is not a business. Licensed programs are doing care for a business and should be held to higher standards. Start out the star system with licensed providers and later carry it over to certified care.</p>
Tanya Cook Tanya's Big House	<p><i>KidsFirst</i>: Quality Counts for Kids Recommendation: Not in support of this initiative.</p> <p>Why is child care the only licensed field being considered for quality ratings? Why not require hospitals, nursing homes, clinics, group homes, etc. for quality ratings. Neither accreditation nor degreed staff are a guarantee for quality care. It is the spirit, philosophy, attitude of the teaching staff that make children feel loved and secure. If a quality rating is going to be established, there needs to be a way to include intangibles into the criteria such as: What do friends say about the center, why do they like the center, are the children happy, are center values the same as mine, is my child important?</p> <p>Implementation: Where is the money come to administer this program? Government should stay out of the business of child care, and instead give larger tax deductions to parents for child care costs. Organizations already in place: Licensing, WECA, NAEYC, 4-C, etc. How many trained professionals will there be? How ill it be assured that they are objective, and not subjective, How often will programs be reviewed? What is the appeal process?</p>

Charity Eleson Wisconsin Council on Children and Families	<p><i>KidsFirst: Quality Counts for Kids Recommendation:</i> Generally support the direction of the Draft recommendation, but have concerns regarding the financing of the overall child care system. Will there be sufficient funding for all eligible Wisconsin Shares families, and for the infrastructure needed for child care centers to meet the standards of quality care to which we are all committed? Will parent co-pays be affected by this? How will this impact the availability of care in rural areas, especially non-traditional hour care? Fiscal Questions: Will dollars be available to support high quality programs to hire well-educated staff, without taking so much money away from lower end programs that we limit parent access to licensed care in some parts of the state? Will there be sufficient Wisconsin Shares subsidy dollars if this program is successful and moves programs to higher quality? We believe that Wisconsin's commitment to ensure that there is not a waiting list for Wisconsin Shares is essential to maintain. Is the proposed funding sufficient to sustain the Tiered Reimbursement system long-term? Support Systems: Will there be adequate funding in the next biennium for programs like TEACH and REWARD that are critical to the ability of providers to hire and retain well-educated teachers? What is the plan for the proposed increase in Pass-Thru funding? Will it be connected to Quality Counts for Kids?</p>
Jessie Theis	<p><i>KidsFirst: Quality Counts for Kids Recommendation:</i> I think it is a good idea to rate child care programs using points and stars. Tiered Reimbursement: I like the star level of reimbursement payment. I think that the child care program will be more likely to try to improve the quality in order to provide better care and to receive higher reimbursement.</p>
Aimee Betro Mid-State Technical College Student	<p><i>KidsFirst: Quality Counts for Kids Recommendation:</i> I think that the rating scale and reimbursement are a good thing. Teacher Qualifications: How many programs have a teacher with a Bachelor's degree? This may cause programs to have a lower rating, but are probably good quality centers. Implementation: How are ratings going to be posted? If the ratings are posted openly, some smaller programs that do not have someone with a least a Bachelor's degree will be left behind and may eventually have to close even though they might be of high quality.</p>
Jacqueline Strand Northwest Connection Family Resources	<p><i>KidsFirst: Quality Counts for Kids Recommendation:</i> The work committee has done a wonderful job of making the system fair for the whole state. Quality Rating Scale: I appreciate the fact that in rural areas, providers will still be able to go up on the rating even though they are not accredited or do not have a degree. Thank you for coming up with fair strategies.</p>
Melissa Rakowski Mid-State Technical College Student	<p><i>KidsFirst: Quality Counts for Kids Recommendation:</i> I think this is an interesting way to judge the quality of a center. Implementation: Will the ratings be advertised for those centers that have excellent ratings? Who will do the ratings? How often with the ratings be updated? If a program receives a bad rating, how long do they have before they are re-rated?</p>

<p>Wisconsin Child Care And Education Coalition</p>	<p><i>KidsFirst: Quality Counts for Kids Recommendation:</i> The Wisconsin Child Care and Education Coalition is eager to participate in initiatives to provide a high quality, fully financed system of early childhood care and education in Wisconsin. This program will require a financial investment to make it a reality to assure high quality.</p> <p>Support Systems: Programs will need support, both financial and technical assistance to improve and maintain higher levels of quality. The current Wisconsin child care infrastructure has been helping programs achieve higher quality for years: Child care resource and referral agencies, Technical assistance providers, quality improvement and staff retention grants, and TEACH and REWARD. These programs have experienced significant budget cuts. It is important to build on current programs.</p> <p>Professional Practices: Consider giving a greater emphasis in this section. Research shows that a well-qualified workforce is key to the quality programs for children. While the emphasis on educational qualifications is critical to providing quality programs, research also demonstrates that a high rate of turnover is directly tied to wages, benefits and working conditions. This section needs to have greater emphasis on program efforts to retain qualified staff. Recommend including a new criterion: use of the Model Work Standards as a tool to assess the working environment for staff/family child care providers and to plan for improvements in staff wages, benefits and working conditions.</p>
<p>Nancy Willman Kenosha County Child Care Coordinator</p>	<p><i>KidsFirst: Quality Counts for Kids Recommendation:</i> Overall support for the Quality Counts objective linking quality to reimbursement. The actual implementation process and education of providers and parents are key to its success.</p> <p>Implementation: Separate program incentive payments from parent co-payments. This will provide incentives to motivate programs to improve quality and to provide additional resources needed to implement improvements as planned. Local County Agency Child Care Administrative Dollars should not be affected by the tiered reimbursement structure. Initial implementation of the new program will require training, process development and increase workload for county staff. Counties will need continued funding support to implement the system changes appropriately.</p> <p>Support Services: The child care community, including providers and partners will need thorough training about the new system. Each community will need time to market and understand the reimbursement system to insure providers have equal access to the reimbursement rate they deserve. Providers wishing to improve education and assessment will need technical assistance. Small family child care programs may lack training and require resources to upgrade quality. Adequate resources for training, support and monitoring are needed. Agencies chosen to assess environments should meet some predetermined requirements and be monitored for quality as well.</p> <p>Teacher Qualifications: Many excellent directors have a combination of education and experience that should be recognized. Funding for TEACH and degree options should assist in helping teachers/directors meet degree requirements.</p>
<p>Kelly A. Reise Mid-State Technical College Student</p>	<p><i>KidsFirst: Quality Counts for Kids Recommendation:</i> I think the rating system is a good idea. I like the inclusion of the education of teachers and directors. I like the inclusion of the environment and curriculum. It is good to include both group centers and family day care centers.</p>

<p>John Potters Director of a corporation child care center</p>	<p><i>KidsFirst: Quality Counts for Kids Recommendation:</i> I strongly urge you and the committee to re-evaluate your proposal. In my opinion, this is a band-aid solution to the ever increasing need for child care subsidy and the lack of funds to accommodate. In rural Wisconsin parents do not have a choice of child care facilities. Most parents do not choose to switch child care facilities, and most are pleased with the service that they are receiving. Many small rural child care centers do not have the ability to hire “4 year degree” teachers or can meet accreditation standards and hope to stay open. If parents receive less funding because they have to take their child to a center that 2 or 3 stars, “out of pocket” co-pay costs will increase causing a possible reduction in the workforce. Parents may have to quit their jobs because they can no longer afford child care – will cause more uninsured families and less people working. More parents may find unregulated child care because that is all that they can afford.</p>
<p>Linda Sternhagen Appleton Child Care Resource and Referral</p>	<p><i>KidsFirst: Quality Counts for Kids Recommendation:</i> The recommendation does not include a statement regarding what quality is. Quality is not accreditation because no one is there to monitor the center. It is not a bachelors degree because each individual teacher has their own measure of quality based on who they are and how they were raised. This current plan will not change the quality in our centers. They can earn points without achieving quality. What quality “is” needs to be established first. Find a quality rating scale and use it for every group and family center. Train professionals on using the scales, rating centers, and offer support and mentoring to achieve quality.</p>
<p>Christina Kirsch Mid-State Technical College Student</p>	<p><i>KidsFirst: Quality Counts for Kids Recommendation:</i> I agree with parts of the proposal. I agree with this because parents can find out which centers provide quality in their area. The system is fair because parents do need to know this type of thing. I do not agree with this proposal because the center could be having a bad day when it is being rated. I believe that sometimes you may need to go back a rate a program another time.</p>
<p>Gena Kraemer Luv-N-Hugs Family Child Care</p>	<p><i>KidsFirst: Quality Counts for Kids Recommendation:</i> I feel this scale system would be redundant and a waste of public resources and taxpayer money. The focus should be on improving and funding the systems that are already in place: The Registry, TEACH/REWARD, and licensing. What does ‘regulatory compliance’ mean? Many regulations are open to interpretation by a licenser. Licensors have different opinions. What are the incentives for child care programs that do not serve Wisconsin Shares families? Teacher Qualifications: Why is an unrelated Bachelors Degree is worth more points that a related Associate’s Degree? Why is a Child Care Administrators Credential worth more than an Infant Toddler Credential?</p>
<p>Jenny Hoffman Economic Support Supervisor Brown County Human Services</p>	<p><i>KidsFirst: Quality Counts for Kids Recommendation:</i> I agree with many of the indicators as they related to licensed child care providers and the overall quality of child care. My main concern is with the educational level requirement for certified providers. Many of the providers that we certify do not have a high school diploma. This may not indicate that the provider is any less qualified to provide quality care. A provider without a high school diploma will not receive the maximum county rate. I am concerned that our existing local agency certifier does not have time to monitor all of these quality indicators. These activities will take up a great deal of time for a staff person who also carries a child care payment caseload.</p>

Kay Olker Child Care Coordinator Manitowoc County HSD	<i>KidsFirst: Quality Counts for Kids Recommendation:</i> My main concern is with the educational level requirement for certified providers. Many of the providers that we certify do not have a high school diploma. I am more concerned with the provisionally certified, grandparents, than the regularly certified person watch children other than relatives.
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Public Hearing Comment Received by CCS